United Nations CRPD/C/SR.379

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Distr.: General
8 March 2018

Original: English

Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Nineteenth session

Summary record of the 379th meeting
Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Tuesday, 27 February 2018, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Ms. Degener

Contents

Consideration of reports submitted by parties to the Convention under article 35 (*continued*)

Initial report of the Russian Federation

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent within one week of the date of the present record to the Documents Management Section (DMS-DCM@un.org).

Any corrected records of the public meetings of the Committee at this session will be reissued for technical reasons after the end of the session.

GE.18-03013 (E) 070318 080318

1803013

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by parties to the Convention under article 35 (*continued*)

Initial report of the Russian Federation (CRPD/C/RUS/1; CRPD/C/RUS/Q/1 and CRPD/C/RUS/Q/1/Add.1)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of the Russian Federation took places at the Committee table.*

2. **Mr. Lekarev** (Russian Federation) said that his country's initial report (CRPD/C/RUS/1) highlighted the changes made to State policy since the ratification of the Convention with a view to adopting a human rights approach to disability. Legislation had been enacted to prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability and efforts had been made to bring the national concept of disability closer into line with the definition contained in the Convention. Changes had been made to the codes of civil and criminal procedure and numerous other laws in order to ensure that persons with disabilities could participate in the life of society on an equal basis with other citizens. A set of oversight bodies had been designated to ensure compliance with national accessibility requirements for persons with disabilities. Over the previous two years, they had recorded and investigated some 39,000 violations of the rights of persons with disabilities. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in the Russian Federation, which functioned as an independent mechanism for monitoring the implementation of the Convention, had also investigated and addressed several cases of discrimination against persons with disabilities during that period.

3. The Government had recently introduced a national disability register with the aim of identifying the barriers facing persons with disabilities and ensuring that they had access to more targeted and effective support. It had also taken steps to encourage deinstitutionalization and make other forms of care and assistance available, such as day centres and mobile support units. In addition, it had launched nationwide initiatives to promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities in society. The State viewed effective rehabilitation in combination with appropriate adaptation of the environment as the key to successful inclusion of persons with disability. Accordingly, a number of initiatives had been adopted to create a barrier-free society. Efforts had been made to support the inclusion of persons with disabilities in their local communities and promote their education and employment. New national building regulations and vehicle manufacturing guidelines had been introduced that took into account the specific accessibility needs of persons with disabilities. Training had been provided to personnel in many sectors who were responsible for providing services to persons with disabilities. Some $7.5 billion — an unprecedented level of financing — had been earmarked for the Accessible Environment Programme, the main instrument for implementing the barrier-free access policy. In the first five years of the Programme more than 18,000 facilities had been adapted for persons with disabilities. The number of schools providing inclusive education had risen, and 60 per cent of children with disabilities were currently enrolled in such schools.

4. Subsidies of around $25 million per year had been provided to organizations of persons with disabilities with a view to supporting their activities and promoting the rights of persons with disabilities. Incentives had also been offered to companies that employed persons with disabilities. As a result of those measures, some 30 per cent of persons with disabilities had been able to find work.

5. The Russian Federation had recently ratified the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled and had taken the necessary steps to implement its provisions. Since 2018, efforts had been made to increase the availability of sign language interpreters and captioning services and to provide assistive devices to persons with hearing and visual impairments.

6. **Ms. Goncharenko** (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in the Russian Federation) said that persons with disabilities in the Russian Federation continued to face difficulties in accessing appropriate rehabilitation services and equipment. A pilot

project had recently been launched which offered persons with disabilities the chance to purchase rehabilitation equipment directly, without having to wait to obtain such equipment through the social insurance system. The High Commissioner monitored the rights of persons with disabilities living in institutions and had made concrete recommendations aimed at deinstitutionalizing care and enabling persons with disabilities to participate and live independently in their local communities.

7. In 2017, there had been some 20,000 persons with disabilities in the prison system. The High Commissioner had worked to ensure that they received appropriate medical and social support during their period of imprisonment. An interagency working group made up of representatives from the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Justice, the prison service, human rights organization and the scientific community had also drafted a bill providing for the release of seriously ill persons from prison.

8. The rights of women with disabilities were protected under domestic legislation on social protection and women's rights. However, the High Commissioner was of the view that the legal provisions governing adoption and guardianship were discriminatory towards some women with disabilities, as they contained a list of illnesses that rendered it impossible for persons with category I disabilities to adopt a child or serve as foster parents, despite the fact that biological parents with that category of disability coped perfectly well with their parental responsibilities.

9. There were a number of organizations of persons with disabilities in the Russian Federation. On 14 December 2017, a coordinating council of Russian human rights commissioners had adopted a resolution calling on the Government to draw up a list of issues on which the views of such organizations must be taken into account in public decision-making processes. Since the ratification of the Convention, considerable effort had been made to enhance accessibility and create suitable living conditions to enable persons with disabilities to participate in public life, but much remained to be done. The Commissioner would continue to use all available means to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities in the Russian Federation.

10. **Mr. Tatić** (Country Rapporteur) said that the Russian Federation had made great strides in improving accessibility and ensuring access to justice for persons with disabilities whose rights had been violated. It was heartening to know that the highest courts in the country took note of the Committee's jurisprudence. Despite those commendable measures, however, the State party continued to take a largely medical approach to disability, as evidenced by its focus on rehabilitation. A large number of persons with disabilities still lived in institutions, in some cases against their will. That was particularly true of persons with intellectual impairments and psychosocial conditions. Substitute decision-making for persons with disabilities remained prevalent, which was of concern. He looked forward to a constructive exchange of views with the delegation on those and other issues.

11. **Mr. Lovászy** (Country Rapporteur), noting that the dialogue offered an opportunity for the delegation and the Committee to learn from one another in an atmosphere of mutual respect and good will, said that the Committee's aim was to improve the situation of persons with disabilities in the Russian Federation and to identify areas for improvement in the State party's implementation of the Convention. The discussion would focus, inter alia, on issues relating to communication, mobility, legal safeguards in institutions, adoption procedures, inclusive education, rehabilitation and early screening services, and legal protections for persons with disabilities. He looked forward to a fruitful and constructive dialogue.

Articles 1–10

12. **Mr. Kim** Hyung Shik asked what steps had been taken to adopt a human rights approach to disability and bring the definition of disability contained in national legislation into line with the Convention. Information on the definition of disability used by the national disability register would also be welcome. He would like to know how many cases of discrimination against persons with disabilities had been reported and what the outcome of those cases had been. It would also be interesting to learn whether national legislation had been amended so as to better protect the rights of the most vulnerable groups of persons

with disabilities, including women and girls, members of ethnic minorities and persons with neurological and psychosocial disorders.

13. **Mr. Ishikawa** said that he would like to know what efforts had been made to involve organizations of persons with disabilities in policy-making processes at the federal, provincial and municipal levels. As he understood it, the Russian word used to refer to a person with a disability was "invalid". He wondered whether measures were envisaged to change the definition of disability and the terminology used to talk about it and whether steps would be taken to bring national legislation and policies into line with the Convention.

14. **Mr. Alsaif** asked whether the State party intended to amend its laws to prohibit intersectional discrimination against women and girls with disabilities. He would appreciate updated information on the anti-violence measures referred to in paragraph 50 of the State party's replies to the list of issues (CRPD/C/RUS/Q/1/Add.1). Regarding accessibility, it would be interesting to know how persons with disabilities and their representative organizations were involved in relevant training. He would also like to hear how the State Information Society Programme for 2011–2020 was being implemented, what steps were being taken to create a barrier-free environment nationwide and whether there were plans to set up a call centre that provided sign language interpretation and to expand the use of Easy Read.

15. **Mr. Kabue** said that the array of legislative changes the State party had already made in relation to disability issues was impressive. He would appreciate further information on the types of violations of the rights of persons with disabilities that had been recorded and what action had been taken in response. Noting reports of discrepancies between the law and practice with regard to the services provided to persons with disabilities, he asked how the State party ensured that persons with disabilities were aware of the various programmes available and whether organizations of persons with disabilities were involved in raising awareness of new measures.

16. **Mr. Ruskus** said that he shared Mr. Ishikawa's concern about the term "invalid" and wished to know what steps were being taken to replace it and other outdated terms, such as "mental retardation", with terms that were more in line with the Convention. He also wished to know what efforts were being made to adopt comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation that encompassed all grounds for discrimination, including disability. He would be grateful to receive information on the steps taken to avoid the institutionalization of children with disabilities and promote their inclusion in society and in mainstream health and educational settings. In particular, what steps was the Government taking to prioritize family-based care and to develop a time-bound plan for deinstitutionalization?

17. **Mr. Langvad** asked what action the State party was taking to prevent lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) persons with psychosocial disabilities from being subjected to forced treatment.

18. **Mr. Martin** asked whether persons with intellectual disabilities had a dedicated representative organization. If not, how did the State party ensure that their voices were heard and what was it doing to encourage self-advocacy? He would also like to hear about any plans to raise awareness of disability issues with a view to overcoming prejudice and stereotypes.

19. He wished to point out that the language used to talk about persons with disabilities was extremely important. Some terms could make the persons concerned feel inferior and disrespected and perpetuated negative stereotypes. They could also be used to segregate persons with disabilities from the rest of the population. Words like "special" and "invalid" carried connotations that were demeaning and not representative of the reality of living with a disability. He urged the State party to use terms that were in line with the Convention and that had been agreed upon by persons with disabilities.

20. **Mr. You** Liang, noting the importance of including persons with disabilities in State party delegations, said that it appeared that few children with disabilities were educated in mainstream schools in the Russian Federation. He wished to know what steps had been taken to allocate more resources to and improve the quality of inclusive education. It would

also be helpful to know whether children with disabilities living in institutions were provided with adequate health care, nutrition and rehabilitation services. In addition, he would welcome information on the financial support made available to families in order to enhance the accessibility of their homes.

21. **Mr. Lovászy** said that he would appreciate further explanations on the biopsychosocial model referred to in paragraph 23 of the State party's replies to the list of issues. In particular, he wished to know how it embodied a human rights approach to disability. He would also appreciate an explanation of the concept of "limited health" as it related to the access of children with disabilities to education. It would be useful to know what services were available for parents of children with disabilities in order to avoid institutionalization. He was curious to know whether a monitoring mechanism was in place to gauge client satisfaction with sign language interpretation services. Commending the State party for ratifying the Marrakesh Treaty, he asked whether a strategy for its implementation, including a fixed time frame, had been adopted.

22. **Mr. Buntan**, noting that the State party appeared to have adopted a mixed model of disability, asked how it would ensure that the two models — medical and social — did not contradict each other and how it promoted a positive image of persons with disabilities and their potential. He also wished to know what steps were being taken to systematically involve persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in all levels of decision-making, especially at the regional and local levels. Applauding the State party for its enthusiastic efforts to improve accessibility, he asked how it ensured that accessibility standards were applied at the regional and local levels. Given the State party's scientific and technological achievements, in particular in the area of artificial intelligence, it would be interesting to know what steps it was taking to ensure that persons with disabilities benefitted from those achievements, notably in terms of greater access to information.

23. **Mr. Basharu** asked what measures were in place to actively consult with persons with disabilities and their representative organizations. He wondered whether such organizations were provided with sufficient funding to enable them to carry out their activities, especially since non-governmental organizations were banned from working with foreign organizations.

24. **Mr. Parra Dussan** asked to what extent organizations of persons with disabilities were involved in decision-making and whether the State party intended to align its laws and its approach to disability with the Convention.

25. **Mr. Chaker** said that he would appreciate information on the services available to children with disabilities who required a high degree of support in order to access education, particularly those who used sign language. Could the delegation comment on whether the suggestions of organizations of persons with disabilities were taken into account in efforts to promote the rights of persons with disabilities?

26. **Mr. Tatić**, pointing out that the fines for rights violations provided for in the Code of Administrative Offences were rather low, asked whether there were any plans to toughen the penalties for discrimination against persons with disabilities. He would welcome a comment from the delegation on allegations of malnutrition and abuse in orphanages and on any action taken pursuant to the Ombudsman's call for deinstitutionalization of children with disabilities. He would also like to know how accessible airports, public transportation, hotels and government buildings were for wheelchair users.

27. **Mr. Pyaneandee** asked to what extent persons with disabilities and their representative organizations were involved in monitoring of compliance with laws concerning the rights of persons with disabilities. He would be interested to know how much was spent on disability-related activities each year as a proportion of gross domestic product.

28. **The Chair** said that she had been surprised to read about the State party's approach to primary prevention of impairment, which included the termination of pregnancy when there was a risk the child would be born with a disability. She wondered whether the State party considered primary prevention to be in line with the Convention. The Committee had received information indicating that two children with disabilities had been removed from

the custody of their foster parents, reportedly on the grounds that the mother was transgender. She wished to know whether the State party would consider returning the children to their foster family and abolishing restrictions on the parental and custodial rights of members of the LGBT community. Would it also consider combating intersectional discrimination by lifting the ban on so-called propaganda on non-traditional sexual relationships?

The meeting was suspended at 4.15 p.m. and resumed at 4.30 p.m.

29. **Mr. Lekarev** (Russian Federation) said that the use of the term "invalid" was of concern to many. Efforts had been made to bring domestic legislation into line with the Convention, including with respect to the definitions of "disability" and "person with disabilities". However, when the proposals had been submitted for consultation, they had been rejected, the argument being that the immediate focus should be on accessibility, reasonable accommodation and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities, rather than on terminology. In addition, there was a fear among organizations of persons with disabilities that a revision of the terminology might lead to a scaling back of support measures. Therefore, the priority for the moment was the practical implementation of the Convention and disability laws. The definition would be addressed eventually, but he could not say exactly when.

30. The federal register of persons with disabilities was a compilation of personal data, including medical records, from different information systems in the Russian Federation, such as the Pension Fund and social welfare institutions. The information was confidential and fully protected. Based on the information contained in the register, persons with disabilities could access certain benefits, such as assistive devices, or apply for special medical services. There were plans to use the register to carry out surveys of persons with disabilities with a view to improving statistical data on various disability issues and making it available in a practical, online format. The data collected in the register would be shared with State, regional and municipal authorities to help them provide support to persons with disabilities living in their territories. Requests had also been received from various service providers, including the national rail company and banks, to access information that would allow them to adapt services and enhance accessibility for persons with disabilities.

31. **Mr. Dymochka** (Russian Federation) said that, although the medical model of disability had never really been used as such, in 2010 a decision had been taken to engage in consultations and study best practice worldwide on disability issues, following which the existing model had been modified to include additional social aspects on the basis of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health, which took account of barriers faced by persons with disabilities. The practices identified had been gradually incorporated into the definition of disability starting in 2012. Best practices from other countries continued to be monitored, and changes were implemented as necessary to ensure optimum implementation of relevant legal provisions.

32. **Ms. Pelevina** (Russian Federation), responding to the questions on discrimination, said that persons with disabilities were equal citizens and enjoyed all the same rights enshrined in the Constitution and international instruments. Any violations or illegal acts committed against persons with disabilities were dealt with by the law enforcement agencies in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Criminal Code. In 2017, 13 criminal cases had been brought against persons who had committed offences against persons with disabilities.

33. **Mr. Belik** (Russian Federation) said that all Russian citizens were equal under the law and discrimination was clearly prohibited under the Criminal Code, although there were no specific provisions regarding discrimination against persons with disabilities. Penalties for acts of discrimination were relatively severe and included prison sentences of up to 2 years and, for public officials, a 5-year ban on serving in a public post. There had been cases in which employers had been prosecuted and convicted for violating the right to employment of persons with disabilities. Therefore, it was considered that the necessary legal mechanisms were in place to combat discrimination against persons with disabilities.

34. **Mr. Lekarev** (Russian Federation) said that the provisions of the Convention applied to all regions in the country, irrespective of their levels of economic and social

development and specific cultural characteristics. The objective in drafting federal legislation related to persons with disabilities was to ensure that it would be effective at all levels. Road maps aimed at enhancing accessibility for persons with disabilities had been developed and were mandatory for all regions. There was an understanding that efforts to ensure physical accessibility would take time, but each region was expected to have medium-term or long-term plans and earmark the necessary resources to achieve certain objectives. The pace of activity and the approach in each region differed according to its size and starting point, but the aim was to achieve a similar level of progress across the board.

35. A law on oversight in the implementation of accessibility requirements had also been adopted, giving the relevant authorities the necessary mandate to carry out oversight activities and provide objective information about the situation on the ground. There were eight registered organizations, created by organizations of persons with disabilities, with their own experts who assessed the level of accessibility of buildings and sites and published reports; some had developed their own systems of voluntary certification. One of the objectives of the Accessible Environment Programme was to ensure that there were public officials in each region with expertise on accessibility issues. Several training programmes had been launched to that end. In connection with the creation of the federal register of persons with disabilities, experts and representatives of organizations of persons with disabilities nationwide had received special training on information and communication technology and tools such as accessibility maps.

36. **Ms. Terekhina** (Russian Federation) said that training for future architects and professionals in the construction industry — but also for those in other fields, such as transport — included special modules on accessibility and the needs of persons with disabilities.

37. **Mr. Lekarev** (Russian Federation) said that the Accessible Environment Programme, which covered the period from 2011 to 2020, included methodological and practical measures, developed in consultation with organizations of persons with disabilities. Funding for the regions had been earmarked under the Programme, and workshops had been organized with representatives of regional authorities and organizations of persons with disabilities to identify the most important buildings for persons with disabilities and assess their level of accessibility. On the basis of the findings, subsidies were provided to the regions to undertake the necessary works in close cooperation with persons with disabilities. Both national and regional organizations of persons with disabilities were also involved in monitoring implementation of the Programme and evaluating the effectiveness of the action taken. By law, persons with disabilities must be consulted on all matters affecting them. It had been decided to extend the Programme to 2025. Plans for future work under the Programme called for measures to bring rehabilitation and other services closer to the individuals who needed them.

38. In 2014, Russian Sign Language had been granted official status, following consultations with the All-Russia Society of Deaf Persons. Persons who were deaf or hard of hearing were entitled to a certain number of free hours of sign language interpretation per year. Efforts were also being made to provide information in easy-to-read format for persons with intellectual disabilities.

39. **Mr. Kamkin** (Russian Federation) said that members of the LGBT community were not forced to undergo any form of treatment; any treatment was provided purely for the purpose of maintaining the health of individuals with certain illness. Sterilization of persons with particular conditions, such as intellectual disabilities, was carried out only pursuant to a court decision.

40. **Mr. Lekarev** (Russian Federation) said that the allegations concerning the removal of children with disabilities from their foster family had no basis in reality.

41. Ms. Terekhina (Russian Federation) said that the interdepartmental plan for inclusive education covered not only architectural accessibility but also special training for teachers on working with children with disabilities in an inclusive setting. Federal standards on inclusive education had been adopted. Significant progress had been made since ratification of the Convention, and there were now some 10,000 inclusive schools in the

Russian Federation, as compared with approximately a thousand in 2011. In other words, one in every five schools was now inclusive. The Government provided support to regional programmes for inclusive education, from preschool to higher education. Children with disabilities in inclusive education received a range of specialized support, such as speech therapy.

42. **Mr. Lekarev** (Russian Federation) said that efforts were also being made to provide high-quality vocational education for persons with disabilities. The goal was to ensure that persons with disabilities were able to choose an educational establishment based on their own personal preferences and not purely on accessibility criteria.

43. **Ms. Sosnina** (Russian Federation) said that, under the Principles of Social Services Act adopted in 2013, steps were being taken to ensure that adults and children with disabilities were able to live in non-institutional settings. Families of children with disabilities were entitled to a range of services in the home or in rehabilitation institutions, including educational and psychological services, as well as financial support of over 5,000 roubles per month. A system of early support was being developed to ensure that such families received assistance as early as possible in the child's development. With regard to psychoneurological institutions, deinstitutionalization was under way, and steps were being taken to provide alternatives, such as assisted living, for as many persons with mental disabilities as possible.

44. **Mr. Lekarev** (Russian Federation) said that some parties had called for the closure of such institutions, but the issue was highly sensitive. Practical procedures were first developed in conjunction with regions that were prepared to take the requisite action. Legislative norms or regulations were then implemented. Approximately 150,000 persons were currently receiving institutional services. Pending deinstitutionalization, the activities of existing institutions were being rendered more transparent through active social monitoring and State oversight.

45. **Ms. Terekhina** (Russian Federation) said that the Ministry of Education and Science had developed a federal database concerning children who were deprived of family care. About 50,000 children were currently registered in the database, including some 16,000 children with disabilities. They lived in care institutions, but vigorous action was being taken to promote their deinstitutionalization. Meanwhile, the Government was making every effort to ensure that the conditions in such institutions resembled as closely as possible those prevailing in a family environment and that the children attended schools in the neighbourhood rather than within the institutions. Road maps had been developed in each region for that purpose. Oversight was conducted by guardianship or managerial boards whose members included representatives of civil society organizations. The conditions in care institutions were also monitored twice a year by independent organizations. Cruel treatment of children in such institutions was entirely unacceptable. Whenever cases were identified, the perpetrators were prosecuted. All institutions were required to meet nutritional standards established at the federal level.

46. **Mr. Lekarev** (Russian Federation) said that terms such as "persons who are not fit to work" were no longer used, and action was being taken to find employment for persons with disabilities.

47. **Ms. Terekhina** (Russian Federation) said that the term "persons with mental retardation" in the law on education was being replaced by the term "persons with intellectual impairments". The reference in the law to "children with health limitations" was being replaced by "children with special educational needs".

48. **Mr. Korneev** (Russian Federation) said that the legislation aimed at combating discrimination did not divide discrimination into distinctive subcategories. All types of discrimination were prosecuted.

49. **Mr. Lekarev** (Russian Federation) said that, unfortunately, there was no nationwide organization representing the interests of persons with intellectual disabilities. He hoped that existing regional organizations would eventually establish organizations at the federal level. At all events, the federal authorities maintained close contact with regional organizations and took account of their views when developing policy measures.

50. With regard to measures aimed at eliminating prejudice and negative stereotypes, the Accessible Environment Programme had conducted an awareness-raising campaign on radio and television and via social media during the period from 2011 to 2015. Persons with disabilities were shown in real-life settings, such as schools and workplaces, and their achievements and contributions to society were highlighted. Footage was also shown of Paralympic champions. Annual surveys conducted to track the evolution of social attitudes towards persons with disabilities had found positive changes throughout the country. The Support Fund for Children in Difficulty had undertaken an in-depth study of people's reactions to persons with disabilities. Independent sociological campaigns had confirmed the positive trend and the change in people's attitudes. Inclusive education had played a major role in that regard.

51. Priority was also being given to inclusive employment. Procedures were being established to support the employment of persons with disabilities, especially young people, who faced the double challenge of having a disability and having little or no work experience. Employers were being encouraged to treat persons with disabilities in the same way as other employees. The effective involvement of persons with disabilities in the workplace was seen as an effective means of combating prejudice and eliminating stereotypes.

52. **Ms. Terekhina** (Russian Federation) said that, from an early age, schoolchildren received instruction aimed at combating stereotypes and promoting understanding and acceptance of persons with disability. Children and their parents were informed about disabilities, the type of support that could be provided to persons with disabilities and how to interact with them.

53. **Mr. Lekarev** (Russian Federation) said that the city of Moscow was unfortunately not yet fully accessible for travellers with disabilities. However, action was being taken to improve the situation. An accessibility programme had been conducted prior to the 2014 Olympic and Paralympic Games, not just in the city of Sochi but also in major aviation transport hubs, including Moscow. A special Accessible Environment Programme was also being implemented in Moscow.

54. **Mr. Egorshev** (Russian Federation), replying to the question concerning fines under the Code of Administrative Offences, said that the fine for breaches of the regulations concerning accessible parking places for persons with disabilities was equivalent to $800.

55. Transport accessibility policies varied from region to region, depending on the number of roads, ports and airports. The Government's policy was aimed at ensuring accessible transport throughout the country, not just in major cities, such as Moscow and Saint Petersburg. Railroads were the easiest means of transport for persons with disabilities. There were more than 900 railway stations in the country and, since ratification of the Convention, a great deal of work had been undertaken to render them accessible. Between 10 and 15 major reconstruction projects were undertaken each year, and 80 per cent of railway stations were currently accessible. Wheelchairs and wheelchair lifts had been purchased, and a number of railway carriages had been specially equipped for the transport of persons with disabilities. During the period from 2014 to 2017, more than $95 million had been spent on such carriages. Manufacturers of transport vehicles, such as buses, trolley buses, trams and subway vehicles, were required to ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities. The sum allocated for the purchase of such vehicles in 2016 exceeded $800 million.

56. **Mr. Lekarev** (Russian Federation) said that associations of hotel owners had developed a road map on compliance with accessibility standards, especially in older hotel buildings. All new buildings were required to ensure accessibility, and the largest companies were encouraged, in line with their role as trendsetters, to foster a corporate culture that promoted accessibility.

Articles 10–20

57. **Mr. Ruskus** noted that persons with disabilities could still be deprived of their legal capacity in the State party. Russian legislation now provided for partial legal capacity, but it did not change the discriminatory substance of the applicable legal provisions. He asked

whether there were any plans to repeal legislation providing for the full or partial deprivation of the legal capacity of persons with disabilities, to fully restore their legal capacity and to replace the existing system with a system of supported decision-making. The level of legal protection for persons deprived of their legal capacity in psychiatric hospitals and institutions was very low. He would like to know whether there was a specific plan at the national or regional level for the deinstitutionalization of persons with disabilities. He would also like information about steps taken to abolish the widespread practice of forced placement and treatment of persons with psychosocial disabilities in psychiatric hospitals and psychoneurological institutions on the grounds of impairment and the confinement of LGBT persons in psychiatric hospitals on the basis of both their disabilities and their sexual orientation.

58. **Mr. Chaker** said that judges and court personnel reportedly did not receive special training on the rights of persons with disabilities and reasonable accommodation. There had also reportedly been cases in which courts had refused to take into account statements by persons with disabilities. Furthermore, many court buildings had not been rendered accessible. He wondered whether there were any training programmes for judicial personnel on the rights of persons with disabilities.

59. **Mr. Buntan** said that persons who were deaf or hard of hearing seemed to have limited access to emergency information in the State party. For instance, emergency number 112 was not accessible. He would like to know what measures had been taken to ensure that emergency information or information on disaster reduction was made available through sign language, Braille, or augmentative or alternative communication devices. He also wished to know whether persons with disabilities were allowed to sign cheques, to open a bank account and to inherit property.

60. **Mr. You** Liang asked whether a State system had been established to ensure independent living conditions for persons with disabilities and whether their representative organizations were consulted in connection with the deinstitutionalization process. He would appreciate information about any measures to ensure that persons with disabilities could enjoy their right to choose where and with whom to live rather being compelled to reside in institutions. He also wished to know whether measures had been taken to protect children placed in children's homes or boarding schools from physical, psychological and sexual abuse, whether staff had been trained for the purpose and whether such situations were monitored by independent authorities.

61. **Mr. Kim** Hyung Shik said that Human Rights Watch had reportedly visited 10 institutions for children with disabilities in the State party and found cases of neglect, poor nutrition, inadequate health care, lack of access to rehabilitation services and education, insufficient access to leisure and play activities, forced feeding and lack of drinking water. That organization had also criticized the lack of individualized attention and stable care-giving relationships. It seemed that the State party was confronted with the long-term task of deinstitutionalization and the short-term task of improving the quality of life in institutions. He would appreciate a comment from the delegation in that regard.

62. **Mr. Tatić** asked how assessment commissions operated and whether they focused on the capabilities of persons with disabilities and the barriers they faced in society. He welcomed the action taken to combat violence and abuse against children with disabilities in care institutions and would like information about the number of perpetrators who had been prosecuted. Lastly, he would like to know the State party's position on the draft Additional Protocol to the Council of Europe Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine (Oviedo Convention) concerning the protection of human rights and dignity of persons with mental disorders with regard to involuntary placement and involuntary treatment, which the Committee viewed as contrary to article 14 of the Convention.

63. **Mr. Parra Dussan** asked how the State party proposed to align its concept of disability based on the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health with article 12 of the Convention. He would also be interested in hearing about the procedures for granting personal assistance to persons with severe disabilities pursuant to the relevant legislation.

64. **Mr. Martin** asked whether the State party had plans to educate legal professionals and persons with disabilities and their families about supported decision-making. He would like to know more about the quality of life in institutions and about how the rights of persons with disabilities were protected. He strongly encouraged the State party to terminate institutionalization. It would be useful in that context to examine best practices in other countries.

65. **Mr. Lovászy** said that he would appreciate information on the number of licensed sign language interpreters for judicial and administrative proceedings and on the availability of documents in accessible formats to all persons with disabilities during such proceedings. In addition, he would be interested in knowing the number of persons with disabilities who were employed as professional staff in the judiciary as judges, public prosecutors or attorneys. Information about legal safeguards to ensure access to reasonable accommodation in the justice system, including law enforcement procedures, would also be welcome, as would updated information on measures taken to make detention facilities accessible for prisoners with disabilities. Lastly, he asked whether there were any plans to align the provisions of the Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure with article 14 of the Convention.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.